



**A TRANSITION THAT PASSES
THE ULTIMATE TEST:**
Maximum Retention of Clients and
Their Assets

WHEN YOU'RE STANDING ON THE THRESHOLD OF A MAJOR CHANGE, IT'S ESSENTIAL TO KNOW YOU'RE WITH A PARTNER THAT HAS YOUR BACK. OUR ROCK-SOLID RESOURCES, STAFF, AND COLLECTIVE EXPERTISE PROVIDE THE LIFELINE YOUR BUSINESS CAN DEPEND ON.



A Transition Management Team Dedicated to Your Success

Most advisors transition just once in a lifetime, but we do it every day. With three decades of experience in guiding advisors and their clients to a new way of doing business, Commonwealth knows the process of changing broker/dealer affiliation inside out. That wealth of expertise is at your disposal to cushion your landing and provide the guidance you need every step of the way.

From day one, you have unlimited access to two primary contacts: your own personal **transition coordinator** and **transition operations specialist**. Together, they head up a **30-person team**, representing virtually every Commonwealth department, that is dedicated to you and your business. From licensing, to compliance, to trading, to IT support, there's someone shepherding your requests through each area and serving as your go-to source for any question about Commonwealth policies, procedures, resources, or staff.



We Do the Heavy Lifting so You Can Stay Focused on Your Business

By assuming ownership of all the potentially distracting details of your transition, our expert problem solvers enable you to devote your full attention to the demanding job of satisfying your clients and growing your business. Here are some of the innovations that help to ease the way:

- A dedicated **transition coordinator**, who functions as the quarterback for your entire transition process, is paired with a dedicated **transition operations specialist**—your go-to person for day-to-day operations questions and issues. We've borrowed the concept of the "Bat Phone" to ensure that whenever you need help, and whatever the issue, you don't need to think about whom to call: all you have to do is pick up the phone.
- Technology consultants help determine specific technology needs for your office and work with you to ensure that everything is up and running, including e-mail setup, from day one.
- A dedicated **advertising liaison** reviews and approves your stationery, business cards, website, and client letters, as well as provides guidance on communications with the public and regulatory requirements.
- A **week-by-week timeline** is customized to accommodate your schedule and business model. (See example on page 4.)

- You can **monitor your progress interactively** through COMMunity Link®, your web-based gateway to the full range of business-building tools and resources we offer.
- From start to finish, **track online, in real time**, your brokerage account transfers, including our receipt of paperwork, whether it is in good order (and, if not, what’s required to get it that way), the arrival of individual assets, and the transfer’s completion.
- A **case workflow tool** (Work in Progress, Follow-Up Required, Work Completed) allows you to interact with the home office on pending business or business that is not in good order and see the progress, add notes, and upload documents when needed.
- One-on-one **web tours and training** with your transition coordinator and transition operations specialist help you and your staff transition your business into Commonwealth’s service areas and processes, and 10 customized training calls cover everything that’s important to you—from compliance to fee-based options to risk management.
- You get assistance with **insurance reappointments** from your transition operations specialist, who will prefill and print any appointment paperwork needed for the transition.
- A range of **marketing materials**, including a stationery program, client notification letters, client brochures, and ad templates, help you communicate changes to your clients and prospects.
- Our in-house experts offer guidance on **building your brand** and **marketing your business**, along with access to custom-printed letterhead, business cards, and envelopes.
- Take advantage of website development through **EasySite**, our program for creating and maintaining a high-impact web presence.
- Get access to the full range of Commonwealth’s business-building, educational, and other resources, including complimentary **practice management consultants**; staff training and **professional development**; and thoughtful advice, timely answers, and a welcoming attitude anytime you need them.



Making the Transition to Happily Ever After

Your partnership with Commonwealth begins the moment you decide to join our community, and we take pride in our reputation for providing an unparalleled transition experience. In fact, most new advisors admit to feeling almost reluctant to see this “honeymoon period” end.

But it’s truly just the beginning. Transition is your first experience with the Commonwealth culture, and it’s meant to both set the stage and set your expectations for the level of indispensable service that will be yours for as long as you’re with us. We strive to make sure that the honeymoon never does end. We are confident the 1,710 Commonwealth advisors who have already been through Transition with us would agree—and we think you will, too.



A Custom Transition Timeline to Guide the Way

Although transitioning your firm may seem like a daunting task, our interactive timeline helps smooth the process by breaking it down into easy-to-follow steps that are specific to your practice and affiliation date. Your custom timeline will be available online through COMMunity Link. You can also request that personal tasks be added to it, so all your key items are consolidated in one place. Below, we've included a general transition timeline to give you an idea of what to expect.



TO OBTAIN INTERNAL APPROVAL

- Submit your licensing file to Commonwealth for approval by Field Development and Compliance.
- Determine your target join date.



EIGHT WEEKS OR MORE PRIOR TO JOINING

- Have an initial transition planning call with your transition coordinator to discuss:
 - Target join date
 - Client transfer paperwork
 - Insurance appointment paperwork
 - Stationery
 - New office setup
 - COMMunity Link password



SIX WEEKS PRIOR TO JOINING

- Select new letterhead and business cards from Commonwealth's library of customizable options.
 - Work with our Compliance team on questions related to stationery, DBA names, titles, and disclosures.
- Place any orders for furniture and office decor.
- Have your technology consultant review your current technology setup, discuss Commonwealth's Model Office, and learn about the discounts we offer on new computers.



FOUR WEEKS PRIOR TO JOINING

- Have your approved stationery, business cards, and envelopes printed by Commonwealth's approved printer or your local printer. (Allow two weeks for printing.)
- Complete your reappointment paperwork for the insurance and variable annuity companies you wish to do business with and mail it to the Licensing department.
- Compose your client notification letter or client announcement (depending on your contract with your current broker/dealer). We offer sample client notification letters you can use, along with a streamlined online submission form for Compliance preapproval.
- To help you promote your firm, take advantage of our Four-Corner Marketing library, which features more than 1,500 customizable marketing pieces, including client brochures, announcement ads, and other general ads and flyers for your business.
- Order any marketing materials you wish to use during your transition.



THREE WEEKS PRIOR TO JOINING

- Start to prepare your initial client mailing. This may include:
 - Approved client notification letter or announcement on approved letterhead
 - Approved business card
 - Commonwealth account forms and transfer forms
 - Commonwealth's client brochure
 - Postage-paid return envelope (Be sure to stock up on stamps!)
- Print client notification or announcement letters on approved letterhead.
- Prepare mailing labels for client mailing.
- Use our Client Account Transfer Log to keep track of account transfer paperwork that you will send to your clients on licensing day.
- If you wish, sign up for our UPS, Staples, and W.B. Mason discounts.



TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO JOINING

- Submit your completed insurance appointment paperwork to the Licensing department.
- Continue to prepare your initial client mailing.



ONE WEEK PRIOR TO JOINING

- Compose your letter of resignation.
- Contact the Licensing department to discuss how you would like us to proceed with your transfer on resignation day.
- Submit a copy of your resignation letter to the Licensing department.
- Provide the name and telephone number of a person at your current broker/dealer so we can confirm your resignation.
- Continue to organize your client mailing.
- Familiarize yourself with PeopleLink, our online home office directory, and Commonwealth's various departments.



WELCOME ABOARD!

Once you're licensed, you'll get a call from our Licensing department letting you know that you are officially on board! At this time, Licensing will give you an advisor number and a branch number.

- Start calling clients to let them know about your new affiliation.
- Send out your client mailing (if your contract allows) and instruct your clients to mail all forms back to you as soon as possible.
- If you wish, send a thank-you letter to clients who have transitioned with you.
- Get to know COMMunity Link and all it has to offer. Browse our e-Learning courses and set aside some time to review those that pertain to you and your practice.
- Call Commonwealth's Service Center for answers to all of your operational questions.



Founded in 1979, Commonwealth Financial Network, member FINRA/SIPC, is the nation's largest privately held independent broker/dealer-RIA, with headquarters in Waltham, Massachusetts, and San Diego, California. The firm supports 1,710 independent advisors nationwide in serving their clients as registered representatives, investment adviser representatives, and registered investment advisers, as well as through hybrid service models. For more information, please visit www.commonwealth.com.

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